

[Here We Can Be Glad #3]

N.H.F.W.P.#1801

Julia M. Sample Subject Living Lore

HERE WE CAN BE [GLA?] New Hampshire

Chapter 3

For almost two years Kathrine worked in the mill at the same loom. For her that loom soon became a personality. Its actions varied almost as much as the New Hampshire weather. Days on end the threads would snap, the woof seemed too / thick for the [warf?] or the woof would snarl and then break, the warp too tight and unyeilding unyiedling . Sometimes a nut would drop and a bolt loosen or a heddle break. Always a little trouble here and a little trouble there. But there were days when the warp and the woof and the loom all worked in harmony. Those were the days when Katherine would hum a little tune under her breath and think. Think about America, think about the Polish people in Manchester. Every week someone new arrived. They said the men came to look the girls over. Well, the girls looked them over too. Altho they no longer had their parents to advise them nor arrange a marriage, still they felt the step must not be taken without some thought. It was difficult to judge these men. They were so courageous, so boastful in their talk, so virile and pursuant. All had adventures to relate, all talked of the fortunes they would make. Some planned to go back to Poland, at least for a visit and thus vindicate their coming to America. They would show the world at large and their families in particular what wonders they were ! The majority planned to establish themselves right here, on farms or in business. Much talk, wild talk went on. # The wmen too had adventures to relate but they were careful not to / outboast the men. Their plans took the form of establishing a home and bringing little Polish-Americans into the world. Katherine thinks how wonderful it

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would be to have a place all their own, just two of them! Even if only one room, that would be more than they had ever had in Poland and it would be theirs. In her mind she checks over the men, until she comes

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Chapter 3

HERE WE CAN BE GLAD

TO Jan. Ah, there was one! Nothing stumped him! On board ship he had all his belongings stolen / from him. With just the clothing on his back, he dismisses the loss with a wave of his hand. Immediately he makes himself a job, he helps the deck hands unload the boats. Over a glass of beer, some one offers a home. In a short time he has saved money. One day he hears about the big mills at Lowell, Massachusetts. Jan knows all the processes of weaving. He would like a job there. Has he enough money to go to Lowell? No, but he's a jolly good fellow and the dock hands make up the difference. With a laugh he tells about being turned down at the mill and then about how he helped a fellow get a load on a wagon and through this fellow he learns the ropes and lands a job. Now he is in Manchester and life is one big adventure. He has made no secret of the fact that he is looking for a girl to marry, he wants a woman. Katherine knows he has taken a fancy to her. Should she marry him? After all it is difficult. She knows nothing about him nor the others, only what they choose to tell about themselves. He, Jan comes from the Warsaw district and she comes from Galicia. She is much less experienced than he. # Meanwhile she is gathering together bit by bit, household linens. With infinite care she embroideries towels, pillow-cases and doilies. She uses the bright peasant colors and always thinks how glad she will be to use them for her and her man. Last night she couldn't see as well as usual. Thaddeus' wife said, "Work all time. Work too much." But Katherine knows she wasn't isn't as quick to see a broken thread as formally. Only yesterday the boss had spoken sharply to her. She answered by brushing her hand across her eyes and looking up at the high ceiling, with its light so far away. "Too far, no good. No can see, Window too

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far." Soon after this episode she was put near a window. At home they told her. "Everyone work in mill have glasses by and by." So by and by she too had glasses. But now she was 3 working her lovely embroideries and crocheting edges for curtains, some day she would will crochet a bedspread but not [?] just yet. "Too much money now, save for wedding. By and by make."

Katherine was still proud of her job in the mill. [?] She liked to smile and laugh and sing a little. The girls were rather unfriendly and the French girl next to her didn't like to see her happy. This girl would make remarks in French to the others and they would look at her and laugh. Katherine knew Polish and German and spoke and understood a little English but French she did not know. One day [??] this girl [?] tripped her and to this day her little finger is stiff where it was broken. Another day she knocked against Katherine while she was eating her lunch and down it went. "Polander, Polander, eigh, eigh, eigh, Polander!" Poor Katherine had no lunch that day. With dignity she abstained from doing what they would have done -- [eat??] eaten from the floor. She thinks, "It will be good to have man. Will not laugh when have man."

One Sunday Katherine hears her name and Jan's read in church. That within three weeks they intend to marry. The women kiss her and the men touch [???] their cheek to Jan's. Another wedding! How glad everyone [?] is! They nod their heads, another home in America!